

Workshop for Substitute Teachers

The MTEA's annual fall workshop for substitute teachers takes place on Tuesday, **September 20**.

Mark your calendar and look for details in the next Dispatch.

First Paycheck - September 17

September 16 will be the first paycheck if you work the week of August 30 - September 2.

Political Action Rebate

During 2011-12, the MTEA membership dues amount of \$16.02 will be deducted from 20 biweekly paychecks. This amount includes a 23¢ contribution to the MTEA's Political Action Fund - a total of \$4.60 for next school year.

This amount is separated from your dues payment. It is used for local political action purposes - primarily to support candidates for the MPS School Board.

A member who does not want to contribute to political action may request a rebate. The MTEA Constitution states: "Each year a signed, written request must be received at the MTEA Office by October 1."

Note on Fair Share

If you have not joined the MTEA, a fair share amount will automatically be deducted from each paycheck.

The fair share amount will **not** include the 23¢ contribution for political action purposes. You do not need to request a refund because political action monies will not be deducted from your paychecks.

Showing Solidarity (Without the Snow)

Last winter, educators and other public employees did not stand alone at the Capitol in Madison. In the **initial** battle over bargaining rights in Wisconsin, public and private unions at the local, state, and national levels were there - united and strong.

Union solidarity continued during the summer recall elections. Members from local unions in the Milwaukee Area Labor Council (MALC) joined educators and other public employees day after day, making phone calls and knocking on doors in State Senate District 8.

Let's Be There for Laborfest!

We have a great opportunity to continue demonstrating our solidarity with AFL-CIO locals especially through a fun-filled Labor Day celebration on **September 5**.

The day kicks off with a parade of union members from downtown to the lakefront. The parade leaves Zeidler Park at 11:00 a.m. and ends at the Summerfest grounds, the site of Laborfest. The free and very family-friendly festival takes place from noon until 5:00 p.m.

Members who join the MTEA group for the parade receive a T-shirt and food/beverage coupons for Laborfest. To join us, please sign up at mtea.org and be sure to enter your T-shirt size and home e-mail address no later than 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, September 1, 2011. (Unfortunately, our budget does not provide these items for spouses and children.)

Act 10: Making the Transition

The vast majority of our state's teacher union members are starting to experience Act 10, Governor Walker's new bargaining law. For example, Greenfield teachers have been told they will work an extra six days this school year, with no additional pay; that significant changes will be made in their health and retirement benefits; and that teachers will no longer be allowed to communicate concerns at school meetings.

Teachers responded with a huge protest at the Greenfield School Board's August 22 meeting.

What Will Happen in MPS?

How will our district's administration and school board approach the elimination of all contracts and the end of collective bargaining? Our union's leaders plan to work with MPS officials - so that the changes will help, not harm, joint efforts to improve teaching and learning.

Two-Year Transition for Our Union

We have a two-step timetable for transitioning to the new reality:

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Attention Retirees!

Since the health insurance changes were implemented on April 1, 2011, many retirees have raised questions about how they are impacted.

On Thursday, September 8, Joan Heithoff will present a health insurance seminar specifically for retirees. It will be held at Serb Hall starting at 4:00 p.m. Please register at mtea.org (Events).

Unemployment Compensation

To start receiving unemployment benefits, you are required to call the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) at **438-7700**. If you prefer, you may apply online at www.ucclaim-wi.org.

You can call weekdays between 6:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. However, the DWD staff is very busy on Mondays. The best times to call are between 8:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. and between 1:30 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday through Friday.

You may also call on Saturday from 9:00 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. and on Sunday from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.

You Must File a Claim for Benefits Each Week

You must call **438-5395** every week to file your claim for a benefit check. An unemployment week starts on Sunday and ends on Saturday. Call after the week is over. A recording will answer your call.

◆ Contracts for our educational assistant, substitute teacher, and accountant/bookkeeper members will **not** expire until after this school year ends - on June 30, **2012**.

◆ The teacher contract will continue for two more school years and **not** expire until June 30, **2013**.

During the transition period, our union will inform and involve all members in preparing for changes. In the meantime, be assured the contracts will continue to be vigorously enforced; you will receive the negotiated benefits and salary; your representation and other rights will be upheld.

No Contract Modifications

One of the provisions of Act 10 already applies to all four MTEA contracts with the school board. If we negotiate a contract modification, the entire contract will expire immediately.

We have followed the advice of our attorneys to avoid putting the contract rights and benefits of our members at risk. We will continue to take a cautious approach in today's volatile political environment.

Substitute Teachers: MPS Phasing Out Insurance Coverage

Q. What is the MPS timeline for phasing out insurance coverage?

A. MPS is eliminating health, dental, and life insurance benefits for substitute teachers on September 1, 2011, except for those who worked 90 or more days last school year and are working in 2011-12.

Q. What are the insurance benefits for those eligible?

A. For 2011-12, eligible substitute teachers have:

- Dental plan options (as in the past).
- Life insurance (as in the past).
- For health insurance, the HMO is the only plan available.

Q. MPS uses the term "EPO," but MTEA uses "HMO?" What's the difference?

A. None, other than perception. Most employees are well aware that an HMO means managed care, limited access to doctors, the usual strengths and weaknesses. Our union believes that "EPO" (which stands for "exclusive provider options") does not sound like an HMO and can be misleading.

Q. What if you're in the PPO plan now and qualify for health benefits for 2011-12?

A. Effective September 1, 2011, MPS will transfer your coverage from the PPO to the HMO.

Q. Will substitute teachers pay a premium contribution in 2011-12?

A. Yes. 2.5% of the HMO premium.

Q. How much will be deducted for health premium contributions?

A. The biweekly paycheck deduction for family coverage will be **\$21.95**; for single, **\$8.36**.
